

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 19, H.R. 22, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Mitch McConnell, Roger F. Wicker, Shelley Moore Capito, Rob Portman, John Cornyn, James M. Inhofe, Daniel Coats, John Boozman, Johnny Isakson, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Mike Rounds, Mike Crapo, Roy Blunt, Thom Tillis, Deb Fischer, Richard Burr.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 22, the Hire More Heroes Act of 2015, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 41, nays 56, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 250 Leg.]

YEAS—41

Alexander	Daines	Lankford
Ayotte	Enzi	McCain
Barrasso	Ernst	Moran
Blunt	Fischer	Portman
Boozman	Flake	Risch
Burr	Gardner	Roberts
Capito	Grassley	Rounds
Cassidy	Hatch	Sasse
Coats	Heller	Sullivan
Cochran	Hoeven	Thune
Collins	Inhofe	Tillis
Cornyn	Isakson	Tillis
Cotton	Johnson	Vitter
Crapo	Kirk	Wicker

NAYS—56

Baldwin	Heitkamp	Peters
Bennet	Hirono	Reed
Blumenthal	Kaine	Reid
Booker	King	Sanders
Boxer	Klobuchar	Schatz
Brown	Leahy	Schumer
Cantwell	Lee	Scott
Cardin	Manchin	Sessions
Carper	Markey	Shaheen
Casey	McCaskill	Shelby
Coons	McConnell	Stabenow
Corker	Menendez	Tester
Cruz	Merkley	Toomey
Donnelly	Mikulski	Udall
Durbin	Murkowski	Warner
Feinstein	Murphy	Warren
Franken	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Paul	Wyden
Heinrich	Perdue	

NOT VOTING—3

Graham	Nelson	Rubio
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 41, the nays are 56.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I enter a motion to reconsider the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, it is my understanding that many of our colleagues on the other side have voted against cloture at this particular point. They wanted to have further time to read the bill. I want everybody to understand that the text is filed, it is at the desk. There are detailed summaries available online on the EPW Committee Web site.

As everyone knows, Senator BOXER, I, and others have been discussing this in great detail.

I am hopeful that by tomorrow we will have cloture on the bill and an opportunity to go forward.

Let me just say to everybody that I know I haven't threatened a Saturday session all year, but there will be a Saturday session and probably Sunday as well. Let me tell you why. We have a chance to achieve a multiyear, bipartisan highway bill. Senator INHOFE and Senator BOXER reported out a 6-year bill. This is a 6-year bill. We have paid for the first 3 years. I believe our colleagues on the other side will find these pay-fors credible. They may not love every single one of them, but there is not a phony one in there.

If we can get this bill over to the House, it is my belief they will take it up. Give the House of Representatives an opportunity to express itself on this bill. Imagine the scenario if we actually were able to produce a multiyear highway bill and get it to the President's desk for signature before the August recess. It is something we could all feel proud of. In my view, there has been outstanding bipartisan work on this, and so we need to keep at it, and that will require us, most definitely, to be here this weekend.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Sen-

ate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Democratic leader.

THE HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. REID. Madam President, first, we all appreciate the work done by Senator MCCONNELL and Senator BOXER. Senator BOXER has been tireless on this, as she is on everything. But we have an issue that I think we need to address. We received this bill, which is more than 1,000 pages, about an hour ago.

I am going to have a caucus tomorrow, and I hope we will have an opportunity at that time to have reports from committees of jurisdiction. Committees of jurisdiction is more than just the Environment and Public Works Committee; finance is involved, commerce, banking, and other committees, of course, are interested.

So we need the opportunity to look at this bill. This is a big bill with a lot of different sections in it dealing with a lot of different issues. We are not asking for anything unusual; we just want to be able to study the bill and talk about it in a private meeting tomorrow at 12 o'clock.

Now, if we were doing something that was—"What are you talking about? You mean you want to read this?" Please. I mean, we have pages of quotes from my friends.

Senator ENZI said:

That is what created this enormous outrage across America of: Did you read the bill? How can you read the bill if you have not seen anything in it, if it has not been given to you? I do not think it is intended to be given to us until we have to shuffle this thing through at the end [and not know what is in it].

LAMAR ALEXANDER, one of the most thoughtful people I have served with in government, said a couple of years ago:

We want to make sure the American people have a chance to read it and they have a chance to know exactly what it costs and they have a chance to know exactly how it affects them. That is not an unreasonable request, we don't think. That is the way the Senate works. That is our job. When it came to the Defense authorization bill, we spent a couple of weeks doing that. When it came to No Child Left Behind, the Education bill, we spent 7 weeks going through it. . . . The Homeland Security bill took 7 weeks. The Energy bill in 2002 took 8 weeks. A farm bill last year took 4 weeks. So we have a little reading to do, a little work to do.

JOHN MCCAIN said:

But could I also add, if we haven't seen it, don't you think we should have time to at least examine it? I mean, I don't think it would be outrageous to ask for a bill to be read that we haven't seen.

I—as have a number of people in this body—have worked on highway bills in the past. We have worked on these bills, and they have taken weeks to get done. We are being presented with something here that basically says: You take this or leave it. That isn't the way it should work around here.

I am going to do everything I can to move forward on a long-term highway bill. I want to get it done. But we are going to have to look at this and find out what my different committees think, what different Senators think, what people at home think. You know, I have a lot of people at home who are interested in what is in this bill. There is the banking provision. There are the pay-fors. I looked at them last week, but that has been a moving target also.

The ranking member of our Finance Committee at this stage—unless he has learned something in the last half hour—doesn't know what the pay-fors are either.

So, in short, we want to be as cooperative as we can, but we are not going to lurch into this legislation without having had a chance to read in detail this 1,030-page bill and, after having read it, to have a discussion within the caucus on this bill.

We would be in a very difficult position if—as the Republican leader said, we are going to work over the weekend, which is fine. I have no problem with that. I have tried that myself a few times; it didn't work so well. But I am willing to be part of the deal here if we need to work this weekend to get it done.

I don't know what the House plans to do, but we are assuming a lot, that the House is going to take up this bill. If they did, that would be wonderful, but I have to say that based on my conversation with the Democrats in the House, in conversations they have had with the Republican leadership over there, I don't think there is a chance in the world they are going to take up this bill. They have sent us a bill—a bill that is for 5 months, with conversations between the White House—not our WHITEHOUSE but the President's White House—to come up with a long-term highway bill. Part of that is some consideration of the Export-Import Bank. I realize how important that is. I have been on this floor talking about how important that is. We have about 45 different countries that have, as we speak, ex-im banks that are working, that are taking away all of our business, so it is important that we get that done also. But we cannot let one get in the way of the other. It is not our fault—Democrats' fault—that we don't have an Ex-Im Bank bill. We didn't create the problems with Ex-Im having gone out of business.

So I want to get a highway bill done and I want to get Ex-Im Bank done, but the Ex-Im Bank problem should not stand in the way of us getting a good, strong, robust highway bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, my good friend the Democratic leader was saying as recently as a couple of weeks ago that we need to do a long-term highway bill. Well, Senator BOXER and I took him seriously. We have worked hard to come up with a bipartisan, multiyear, paid-for highway

bill. The fact that it hasn't been online very long is a good argument, and our friends will have an opportunity to read every bit of it. I hope at that point they will find it attractive to move forward. As I have said for over I guess now something like 2 months, this bill is an opportunity for those who support the Ex-Im Bank to offer an amendment on that subject.

So it is further complicated in terms of timing by the fact that the House of Representatives is leaving a week earlier than we are. I can't say with certainty that the House of Representatives will take up and pass a multiyear highway bill that doesn't raise the gas tax and is credibly paid for, but it is a lot more attractive, it strikes me, than a 6-month extension that we have to revisit again in December.

I am hopeful that the House will take a look at what we have done on the Senate side on a bipartisan basis and find it very appealing. So we would like to work our way through this and we intend to work our way through it—including the weekend—to get what we believe is an important accomplishment for the country over to the House of Representatives so they can take a look at it, and maybe they will find it appealing as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, if I could say to both leaders, whom I respect tremendously—and I agree with Leader REID 99.9 percent of the time—this is the situation: We have a highway trust fund expiring, going bust, going broke, and, yes, we have to spend some time. You know, we have a lot of staff; we can divide this up—250 pages, 4 people. We have a summary. We have a summary of the bill out there for everybody, and we can just say we need 4 weeks or 6 weeks to look at it.

The EPW piece, as my friend Senator INHOFE knows, has been out there for 3 months—not that long; at least 2 months. We haven't changed much in that. It has been out there, so that has been reviewed.

All I want to say is this: If we could just keep our eye on the prize—and I understand that the way we proceed over here is important. That is why I voted no, not to go to a bill I wrote with Senator MCCONNELL, because I agree with my leader completely. We need a chance to look at it. But I would submit that this isn't the first time we have ever done a highway bill. This is a little different from a health care bill in the sense that it is a highway bill. Most of it is very similar. I would say EPW builds off the old bill we had before, and most of the bills track older bills.

I don't think it is going to be that hard for us to detail our staff to read it because—here is the problem—if we don't, we have 800,000 construction workers who are still not back to work, and we have 7 States that have stopped doing anything. So if we could just keep our eye on the prize, which is

businesses being able to do what they want to do: build—I had a bridge collapse 2 days ago. You can't get from California to Arizona.

So I hope that tomorrow we will be able to join with our friends and vote to proceed. If we don't like the bill, we will have three more opportunities to vote no. But I would love to get on this bill, get moving on it, and see if we can keep this economy moving in the right direction and not take a chance, as many economists said we will, if we don't do a long-term bill.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Will the Senator from California yield for a question?

Mrs. BOXER. Yes, I will.

Mr. MCCONNELL. My understanding is that the Senator and Chairman INHOFE have been discussing with people around the country who would benefit from this bill. Does the Senator have a sense of their enthusiasm for the product we have come up with?

Mrs. BOXER. I do. As I shared with Leader REID today, we have 68 organizations, from labor, to business, to general contractors. I have the list. They are asking us, begging us to move forward—the National Governors Association. It is really a broad-based number of organizations that don't agree all the time. I mean that the building trade doesn't often agree with the Chamber of Commerce, but they agree on this. So I think there is enthusiasm.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Would I be correct in saying they are less than enthusiastic about another short-term extension?

Mrs. BOXER. They agree with those of us who have said that is a death by a thousand cuts. We just can't keep on doing these short-term extensions.

I would say this to the Republican leader. If you or I went to the bank to get a mortgage and the banker smiled and said that you get that mortgage, but it is only for 6 months or 5 months, you wouldn't buy the house.

No one is going to build a new project or fix a bridge that has multiyear costs if they know the money could run out in 5 months or in the short term.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Would it also be correct, I ask the Senator from California, if we are fortunate enough to send a multiyear paid-for highway bill over to the House, that the same constituent groups that have had an interest in this and have indicated their enthusiasm to you would likely descend on the House and suggest that this might be something they ought to take a look at?

Mrs. BOXER. I think there will be huge momentum if we are able to pass this in a bipartisan way; yes, I do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I have been listening carefully to what concerns people have, and I have to remind everyone that it was June 24—June 24—that we passed this bill out of committee. We had been working on this bill for months before that.

All of us realize that between the last bill we had, which was a multiyear bill in 2005—that we then had a 5-year bill, and since that expired at the end of 2009, we have had nothing but extensions. Those extensions cost 30 percent off the top just because short-term extensions don't work. But we went ahead, and we passed a bill.

The reason I am optimistic that if we can get this to the House they will sign it is because that wasn't a problem at all when it went to the House the last time. We showed them that the cost of the bill is far less—the conservative position. That was with 33 Members of the House on the transportation and infrastructure committee. So all of the Republicans and all of the Democrats on their committee voted for it. Those same Democrats and Republicans over there would support this.

I think the reason they came out originally for a shorter term bill was to pack it in with some other things they wanted to get passed. But I have yet to talk to the first Member of the House who doesn't say: If you bring us a multiyear bill, we will sign it.

So I think that is a moot statement. I think that will happen, and we are willing to stay here until it does happen.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I appreciate the chairman and the ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee pointing out that the actual underlying authorization language in this legislation has been public information since June 24—June 24. The only thing that is a little different about this underlying bill—it is not as if this were air-dropped out of heaven, and it showed up on people's desks—is that Senator HATCH, the chairman of the Committee on Finance, and other committee chairmen on the commerce committee, EPW, the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee have come up with a group of pay-fors to figure a way to pay for 3 years now of this underlying 6-year bill.

So I think it is absolutely accurate to say that the good work being done by the Environment and Public Works Committee to pass a 6-year bill will be done when this bill is passed, but we have only been able to agree on 3 years of pay-fors. I wish we could have gone longer, but that is not bad considering our recent record with these temporary patches, which I agree is a terrible way to do business.

So I congratulate the Senator from California and those who have worked to make this bill as good as it is, but I want to make another point. There are others who are arguing: Well, we shouldn't be doing this. We ought to be passing a temporary patch, and then we should be doing international tax reform and trying to come up with some additional revenue out of that process that will pay for a 6-year bill.

Well, the fact of the matter is that nothing we will do with this bill precludes that good work from going forward.

As a matter of fact, after 3 years of paying for this bill, at some point we are going to have to find a way to re-charge the bill in order to complete the work that was first started in the underlying 6-year bill. So I don't want anybody to be under a misconception, because I think you might if you didn't know the context of thinking that all of a sudden this 1,000-page bill appeared on people's desks, and they do not know where it came from, and they do not know anything about its provenance or what it will actually do. The truth is very, very different.

It is important, and I respect the fact, as the Senator from California has made the point, that people do need to get comfortable with the paperwork. But what we have tried to do is to come up with credible ways to pay for the bill that actually represents a consensus to pay for 3 years rather than this idea of a 6-month patch and hoping that somehow we will come up with the money in December for a 6-year bill.

So while I regret this failed cloture vote, this bill does represent a significant step forward, and I am encouraged by what I have seen in terms of the bipartisan cooperation that allowed us to make progress on a number of contentious matters so far this year, and I thank the minority whip for his good work on this as well.

We passed an education bill. We passed trade promotion authority. It was not universally popular on both sides, but this was a priority for the President and I think something that represents a step forward for our economy, opening markets for the things we raise and grow and the things we make in this country.

We have done a number of important things that I hope begin to regain the public's trust and confidence that we are actually able to function and that even though we have very different ideas about how to get to a conclusion, we can actually find common ground and make some progress.

In my State in particular—Texas being a large State—the Texas A&M Transportation Institute estimates that by the year 2020, 8.4 billion hours will be spent waiting in traffic—8.4 billion hours. Of course, that also means that 4 billion gallons of gas will be wasted in the process. Imagine the pollution, not to mention the heartburn associated with congestion on our highways and roadways.

We are, thank goodness, a fast-growing State relative to the rest of the country. We are a big State. We need the transportation infrastructure to keep our economy moving and to create jobs and economic growth.

So I am confident we can work in a bipartisan manner to address what I hope is just a temporary obstacle and avoid these patches that kick the can

down the road and provide no predictability or planning ability so these long-term projects can be initiated and completed.

I would just point out the fact that Texas has not waited on the Federal Government in order to deal with its transportation needs. Last November, by an overwhelming 4-to-1 margin, Texans approved a ballot initiative that provided an additional \$1.7 billion to upgrade and maintain our transportation network. So I congratulate our leaders at the State level who have taken the initiative to begin to make that downpayment on upgrading and maintaining our transportation network, but estimates are we need as much as \$5 billion in order to do that. So this represents just a downpayment. We need to pass the Federal highway bill in order to complete our work.

As I pointed out, our State has currently about 27 million people. By 2040, it is estimated to reach as many as 45 million people. So we need this infrastructure, but we are not alone. We are not unique in that sense. Every State needs transportation infrastructure to keep people and goods moving in order to continue to grow our economy because a growing economy creates jobs and opportunity, and the one thing we need in this country is a growing economy.

Last year, in 2014, the Texas economy grew at 5.2 percent. The U.S. economy grew at 2.2 percent. That is why, because of that 3-point differential, we have created more jobs in Texas—or seen jobs created by the private sector, I should say—than anywhere else in the country. If we fail to pass a multiyear transportation bill, if we somehow decide to shoot ourselves in the foot and fail in this important effort, we will have only ourselves to blame, and we will be contributing to the problem rather than contributing to the solution.

The resources provided for in this legislation will help relieve urban congestion, upgrade rural routes, and improve the overall safety and efficiency of our highways. It is something our friends across the aisle just a few short weeks ago said they wanted. They said they were worried about this impending deadline coming up where we needed to do something, and they were predicting that perhaps we would just have another patch. They called for a longer term highway bill. So I would urge our colleagues to take yes for an answer.

Thanks to the good work done by Chairman HATCH of the Committee on Finance and a lot of work on a bipartisan basis across the aisle, we have actually come up with enough money—enough legitimate pay-fors—to pass a 3-year transportation bill with the prospect, if we can come up with some additional funds through international tax reform, to backfill the final 3 years. So nothing here actually precludes that effort. Nothing cuts that off. This is, I think, part of doing our

basic job as Members of the Congress. It is not particularly attractive or sexy or interesting, but it is about competence, it is about doing our job, and it is about putting the American people's interests first.

So I hope by tomorrow our colleagues will have had a chance to satisfy themselves and understand the pay-fors in this bill, recognizing that most of this information has been out there in the public domain for a long, long time. I am not asking them to like it, I am not asking them to fall in love with the pay-fors, but I am asking them to let us go forward and to let the Senate be the Senate. Let people offer their ideas, hopefully get votes on constructive suggestions, eventually pass this legislation, and send it over to the House, where I predict, if it comes out of the Senate with a good strong vote, our friends in the House will take it up and pass it and send it to the President, and we will have fulfilled our responsibility.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, let me add my voice to this bipartisan chorus. It is embarrassing to the United States of America that we are now in the midst of our 33rd short-term extension of the highway trust fund.

This 60-day extension ends in 10 days. It is true and the Senator from Texas is correct that many of us have come to the floor and said this is beneath the dignity of a great nation—that we cannot invest in our own economy, in our own business growth. Building the highways and bridges and the mass transit that sustains a great nation takes a determined long-term effort.

Now, there are those—not on our side of the aisle, but there are those—who question whether the Federal Government should be involved in this at all. The so-called devolution movement argues, I understand, that this really should be a State and local matter: Get the Federal Government out of the business of planning the transportation grid for America.

I have three words for those people who believe that: Dwight David Eisenhower, a Republican President who, in the 1950s, had the vision and determination, once he had seen the autobahn in Germany, to say that the United States of America needs an interstate highway system for its national defense. That is how he sold it. He sold it to a bipartisan Congress, and we have lived with that benefit ever since.

Our generation and even those before us have inherited the vision of that President and Members of Congress who said: Let us invest in the long-term development of America.

Think about your own home State and what interstate highways mean to your economy. In my State, if you are a town lucky enough to live next to an interstate, you are bound to have a good economy. And if you are blessed

with the intersection of two interstates, hold on tight, because the opportunities are limitless.

So that generation 60 years ago had a vision. The question is, Do we have a vision? We certainly don't with 60-day extensions with the highway trust fund. That is why when Senator MCCONNELL on the Republican side offered a long-term approach, 3 years—I wish it were 6—but 3 years actually paid for, I believe we should take it seriously.

One Senator among us, Senator BOXER of California, did. As chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, BARBARA BOXER rolled up her sleeves and started negotiating, crafting an agreement.

How about this for an assignment. We said to Senator BOXER: Come up with a long-term highway trust fund bill, get it through four different committees to the satisfaction of at least the majority of the 45 other Democratic Senators, work out your differences, and report to us in 10 days. She did. I have to give credit to her, as big as this bill may be—and by Senate standards it is one of the larger ones—it was an undertaking she took seriously and we should take seriously too. Now that we have the bill, there is no excuse. There is plenty of time to read this. Don't believe that every word on every page is valuable, but let's go through it carefully and make sure we understand completely what we are doing before we vote. That was the cloture vote we had earlier today.

When I went home over this weekend and called leaders in my State—I called the CEOs of two major corporations, I called the labor unions, I called the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and they were over the moon and happy with the notion that we are finally going to come up with at least a 3-year highway trust fund bill.

I will be reading this carefully. In the course of reading it, I hope I can come to the conclusion that this is the right answer to move us forward to build our infrastructure for the next generation.

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, when President Obama came to office, he looked out at the threats across America, and there were four hard-target threats: Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran. The situation in Iran was particularly worrisome because there was a recurrent belief that Iran was developing nuclear weapons. I have heard critics ask: Well, what difference would it make? How foolish would it be for Iran to launch a nuclear weapon against anyone? Every nuclear weapon that is launched has a return address, and that country will pay dearly for a reckless decision such as that. But the fear the President had and we shared was that if Iran developed a nuclear weapon in the Middle East, it would trigger an arms race, and many other countries in that volatile region of the

world would then seek to develop their own nuclear weapons and the potential conflagration was incredible.

There was also a concern that one of the first targets of Iran would be our close ally and friend, the nation of Israel. It is easy to reach that conclusion when you read and hear the rhetoric of the rightwing in Iran, which will not even recognize Israel's right to exist. President Obama set out to do something about it.

It was clear from our experience in Iraq and Afghanistan that sending in American troops was something that had to be thought about long and hard. We have the best military in the world, but let's face it, what we faced in Iraq with roadside bombs maimed and killed so many American soldiers that we realized this new world of asymmetric military confrontation didn't guarantee that the best military in the world would have an easy time of it.

We ended up with almost 5,000 casualties in Iraq and nearly 3,000 now in Afghanistan, and Afghanistan turned out to be the longest war in U.S. history. This President and the American people were reluctant to face another military confrontation.

This President made a decision. I have talked to him about it. He decided every leader from every country who came in to see him would be asked to join in an effort to impose sanctions on Iran to bring them to the negotiating table over the issue of their nuclear capability.

The President put together an incredible coalition because we learned long ago unilateral sanctions are not worth much, but if you can bring many nations around the world into a common purpose of putting the pressure on a country, it can have a positive impact.

The coalition the President put together was amazing; witness the negotiations themselves where China and Russia were sitting at the same side of the table as the United States and the European Union—England and France—and many other countries joined us in imposing these economic sanctions when they had little to gain and a lot to lose when it came to the oil resources of Iran. The President's determination to put the sanctions on Iran was for the purpose of bringing them to the negotiating table. That diplomatic gathering would literally have been the first meeting in 35 years between Iran and the United States, representing that period of time when our relationship with Iran had reached its lowest possible point. At this point, the goal of the negotiation was very clear: stop Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

How real was the threat that they were developing such a weapon? If you go back in time and read the quotes from the Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu, for years—more than 10 years—he has been warning that the Iranians were close to developing a nuclear weapon. It was a matter of weeks, months, a year at the